

Message Text

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11

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /079 W

----- 056567

R 110805Z SEP 75

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7414

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, PBOR, JO, IS

SUBJECT: WEST BANK VILLAGE COUNCIL ELECTIONS

REF: AMMAN 6066

1. LOCAL ARABIC PRESS HAS CARRIED STORIES DURING PAST FEW DAYS RE PLANS FOR ELECTIONS IN OCTOBER-NOVEMBER FOR WEST BANK VILLAGE COUNCILS. ELECTIONS IN QUESTION DO NOT INCLUDE LARGER MUNICIPALITIES OR CITIES, SUCH AS NABLUS, HEBRON, JERICHO, RAMALLAH, BETHLEHEM. ELECTIONS FOR LATTER ARE DUE SPRING 1976.

2. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT CYCLE FOR VILLAGE COUNCIL ELECTIONS IS THREE YEARS, AS OPPOSED TO CITIES, WHICH IS FIVE YEARS. UPCOMING ELECTIONS, WE ARE TOLD, ARE DUE UNDER JORDANIAN LAW AT THIS TIME, AND ARE TO TAKE PLACE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THAT LAW. WE ASSUME DISSOLUTION OF EXISTING VILLAGE COUNCILS IS STEP PPREPARATORY TO

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ELECTIONS FOR NEW COUNCILS.

3. THERE HAS BEEN TALK IN PAST FEW WEEKS OF ALLEGED PLANS OF GOI TO CHANGE LAW GOVERNING WHO IS PERMITTED TO VOTE IN CITY ELECTIONS, BUT SUCH CHANGES ARE NOT APPARENTLY CONTEMPLATED IN CONNECTION WITH THIS FALL'S VILLAGE COUNCIL ELECTIONS. AMMAN PRESS REPORTS CITED REFTEL APPEAR TO HAVE CONFUSED THE TWO SETS OF ELECTIONS. LOCAL PALESTINIANS HAVE VOICED OPPOSITION TO ANY CHANGES BY GOI IN LAW GOVERNING ELECTIONS ON GROUNDS THIS CONTRARY TO GENEVA CONVENTION AS CITED PARA 3B REFTEL. CHANGES THAT HAVE BEEN MENTIONED INCLUDE GIVING WOMEN FRANCHISE, LOWERING VOTING AGE, AND ELIMINATING REQUIREMENT THAT VOTER BE TAXPAYER. WHILE AT LEAST SOME WEST BANKERS AGREE THAT CERTAIN CHANGES ALONG THESE LINES MIGHT BE DESIRABLE UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES, MOST LEADERS OPPOSE ANY CHANGE ON GROUND OF PRINCIPLE AS LONG AS AREA REMAINS UNDER OCCUPATION (SEE JERUSALEM A-40, NOTAL, RE VIEWS OF ANWAR KHATIB.)
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